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ELECTION 76: THE JEWISH VOTE
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///EDITORS NOTE: THIS IS THE THIRD REPORT IN A SPECIAL SERIES WE PLAN ON THE NATIONAL ELECTION. EACH WILL DISCUSS ISSUES, VOTING BLOCS AND REGIONS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A SPECIAL LOCALE OR GROUP.///

ANNCR:

VOTERS IN THE UNITED STATES GO TO THE POLLS ON NOVEMBER SECOND TO ELECT A PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS. VOA CORRESPONDENT LARRY FREUND, IN NEW YORK, EXAMINES ONE OF THE GROUPS OF VOTERS THAT WILL FIGURE IN THE ELECTION RESULTS:

VOICE:

THERE WAS A PRIMARY ELECTION HERE IN NEW YORK A FEW WEEKS AGO -- DEMOCRATS VOTING TO SELECT A CANDIDATE FOR THE U.S. SENATE.

THE OUTCOME OF THE PRIMARY WAS CLOSE. ONLY ONE PERCENT OF THE BALLOTS -- SEVERAL THOUSAND VOTES -- SEPARATED THE WINNER OF THE PRIMARY ELECTION -- FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS DANIEL MOYNIHAN -- FROM HIS NEAREST RIVAL.

NOT LONG AFTER THAT CLOSE ELECTION A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED FOR NEW YORK'S JEWISH COMMUNITY EXPLAINED THE RESULTS, IT WAS OUR EDITORIAL SUPPORT FOR MOYNIHAN, SAID THE NEWSPAPER, THAT GAVE HIM HIS WINNING MARGIN. AND THE WEEKLY JOURNAL POINTED TO ELECTION DISTRICTS IN NEW YORK WITH MOSTLY JEWISH VOTERS -- ELECTION DISTRICTS THAT GAVE MISTER MOYNIHAN LARGE MAJORITIES. SOME OBSERVERS QUESTION WHETHER THE NEWSPAPER ITSELF MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE ELECTION RESULTS. BUT THE SUPPORT FOR MISTER MOYNIHAN FROM NEW YORK'S

JEWISH COMMUNITY DOES SEEM TO BE ADDED EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS A "JEWISH VOTE" IN THE UNITED STATES...AND IT IS SOMETHING TO BE RECKONED WITH.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- HIMMELFARB

"THERE IS A KIND OF POLITICAL CULTURE, POLITICAL TRADITION WHICH MOST AMERICAN JEWS SHARE INFORMALLY."

VOICE:

MILTON HIMMELFARB, AN OFFICIAL OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE AND AN ANALYST OF AMERICAN VOTING PATTERNS...

TAPE: CUT TWO -- HIMMELFARB

"THERE IS A KIND OF INFORMAL POLITICAL COMMUNITY AMONG JEWS WHICH MANY OF THEM WILL NOT EVEN RECOGNIZE AS JEWISH. THEY WILL SEE IT IN MORE CONVENTIONAL POLITICAL TERMS. THEY WILL THINK OF THEMSELVES AS LIBERAL VOTERS OR MODERATE VOTERS -- THINGS OF THAT SORT."

VOICE:

THERE ARE SOME FIVE OR SIX MILLION JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES, MOST OF THEM CONCENTRATED IN THE COUNTRY'S LARGE URBAN CENTERS -- IN NEW YORK, MIAMI, LOS ANGELES, CHICAGO, AND OTHER CITIES THAT OFTEN PLAY CRUCIAL ROLES IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. AND JEWS, MORE THAN MOST OTHER GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES, TEND TO VOTE IN RELATIVELY HIGH NUMBERS. AND SO, SAYS MILTON HIMMELFARB, THE JEWISH VOTE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN AN ELECTION:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- HIMMELFARB

"IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE BECAUSE THE VOTE OF EVERY GROUP MAKES A DIFFERENCE AND ESPECIALLY A GROUP WHICH IS POLITICALLY CONSCIENTIOUS, AND WHICH CAN BE DEPENDED UPON TO COME OUT AND VOTE BOTH IN PRIMARIES AND IN GENERAL ELECTIONS. JEWS TEND TO BE CIVIC IN THIS SENSE. THE JEWISH GROUP AS A WHOLE HAS A RATHER HIGH RATE OF VOTING PARTICIPATION."

VOICE:

THE JEWISH VOTE IN THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN MOSTLY LIBERAL AND MOSTLY IN SUPPORT OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE PRESIDENCY OF FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT. EVEN

FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN MANY JEWS WERE ALIENATED BY SOME OF THE EXTREME POLICIES OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, GEORGE MCGOVERN, TWO OUT OF EVERY THREE JEWS STILL CAST THEIR BALLOTS FOR MISTER MCGOVERN. BUT IF MOST JEWS CAN STILL BE DESCRIBED AS LIBERAL OR PROGRESSIVE, THEIR VOTE IS CHANGING. SIMON WEBER, EDITOR OF "THE JEWISH DAILY FORWARD," THE ONLY YIDDISH LANGUAGE DAILY NEWSPAPER IN THE WORLD, PUTS IT THIS WAY:

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- WEBER

"IT HAS CHANGED CONSIDERABLY, THE AUTOMATIC ACCEPTANCE OF A DEMOCRAT AS AGAINST A REPUBLICAN HAS DIMINISHED A GREAT DEAL SINCE THE DAYS OF ROOSEVELT."

VOICE:

NEWSPAPER EDITOR SIMON WEBER SAYS MOST OF HIS READERS ARE MIDDLE CLASS AND POOR JEWS, WORRIED ABOUT WORSENING URBAN CONDITIONS, CRIME RATES, PERSONAL SECURITY AND CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL -- ALL ISSUES ON WHICH CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES TEND TO FOCUS THEIR APPEALS. IN THAT SENSE, JEWISH VOTERS TEND TO REVERSE THE VOTING PATTERNS OF MOST OTHER GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES, WHERE PEOPLE TEND TO BECOME MORE CONSERVATIVE AS THEY BECOME WEALTHIER. BUT -- AS ONE STUDY OF JEWS AND AMERICAN POLITICS NOTES -- AS JEWS MOVE UP EDUCATIONAL, ECONOMIC AND PROFESSIONAL LADDERS THEIR VOTES BECOME INCREASINGLY PROGRESSIVE, MORE AMENABLE TO CHANGE. WHAT ABOUT THE QUESTION OF ISRAEL? SAYS MILTON HIMMELFARB OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE:

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- HIMMELFARB

"IN FOREIGN POLICY, MOST JEWS CANNOT BE COUNTED ON TO VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE WHO IS PERCEIVED AS BEING HOSTILE TO ISRAEL OR INDIFFERENT TO ISRAEL. ONCE A CANDIDATE, HOWEVER, IS

PERCEIVED AS BEING FRIENDLY TO ISRAEL, THEN THAT RECEDES INTO THE BACKGROUND AND THE OTHER THINGS COME FORWARD, THE SAME SORTS OF THINGS THAT OCCUPY THE ATTENTION OF AMERICAN VOTERS GENERALLY..."

VOICE:

ON THAT SAME ISSUE -- ISRAEL -- ANOTHER VIEW: RABBI SEYMOUR SEGAL, OF THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY:

TAPE: CUT SIX -- SEGAL

"I THINK IT'S MISTAKE TO THINK THAT THE JEWISH VOTER, SOPHISTICATED AS HE IS, VOTES ONLY ON ONE ISSUE. IT IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE, BUT IT'S CERTAINLY NOT THE ONLY ONE."

VOICE:

RABBI SEGAL IS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF CONSERVATIVE AND REPUBLICAN PARTY CAUSES. HE BELIEVES AN INCREASING NUMBER OF JEWS ARE JOINING HIM ON THE RIGHT. BUT HE IS WILLING TO BET THAT THE MAJORITY OF JEWS WILL CONTINUE TO BE LIBERAL AND THAT PARTICULARLY THE HIGHEST INCOME GROUPS IN THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY WILL VOTE FOR GOVERNOR JIMMY CARTER ON NOVEMBER SECOND.

MOST OBSERVERS AGREE.

GH/PY